

Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

We Must Keep God's
Commandments

TRUTH'S TORCH

THE RIVER OF LIFE

PARENTS

LIFE WITH A PURPOSE

"BE STRONG"

THE KING'S BUSINESS

THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE DAY OF SALVATION

Megiddo Message

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Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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HISTORY of the MEGIDDO MISSION 13th edition

The pages of this book unfold the purpose of our organization and the scope of our work, both past and present, for the dissemination of Truth. This edition is revised to include more facts relating to present-day home and missionary activities. Old subscribers who have long cherished an unfulfilled desire to visit the Mission can now "get acquainted" through the medium of the printed page. A comprehensive synopsis of our beliefs is contained in the Appendix.

Price 40 cents postpaid.



"Twice the Pages"

Dear Sister:

The *Megiddo Bible Lesson* was received yesterday. Read it over twice. The subjects are so enlightening, I wish there were twice the pages.

Wake and watch, or else thy night

Christ can ne'er enlighten;

Far-off still will seem the light,

That thy path should brighten.

God demands eyes and hands

Open for the offers

He so richly proffers.

Spotswood, N. J.

B. H.

Tracts: What Does the Bible Mean to You?

Dear Friend:

Some people to whom we have given the tract, *What does the Bible Mean to You?*, have called to express how much they have enjoyed it, and how it has opened their eyes to the truth.

Hartsville, S. C.

V. S.

Something Authentic

Dear Brother:

The book entitled *God's Spiritual Creation* was an inspiration. I have read so much about the first three chapters of Genesis that I was anxious to find something authentic on this vital matter.

Plymouth, England

G. P.

Gratitude

Dear Friend:

I wish to express my grateful thanks to you for all your Megiddo Mission has done, and my gracious appreciation for its kindness since I first came to know of you from the advertisement, *Elijah Coming Before Christ*. Your bi-weekly papers are indeed most instructive, and contain some of the nicest poems I have ever read. Your Mission must indeed be near the throne of God in your prayers, meditations, and in the printed word.

Christ Church, N. Z.

A. B.

In Spite of Obstacles

Dear Sister:

Every great man we read about has had some great obstacle to overcome; and if he had not kept in his mind a vision of what he wanted to become, he would never have become great. Many were born into very poor homes and had to overcome poverty, but they never ceased to look for opportunities to better themselves. They kept on persevering in spite of all the hardships and setbacks.

So if we want the reward that God has offered, we must keep in mind the wonderful promises. They will help us to do the things we should do.

Adamsville, Tenn.

I. P.

To Obtain Salvation

We Must Keep God's Commandments

By the Late Rev. L. T. Nichols

HOW utterly destitute the masses have become of belief in the old ancient gospel and have substituted such subterfuge as that they can be saved apart from fearing God, which He has told us plainly is to "depart from evil."

When we contrast the present statements of theologians with the unerring Word of Jehovah, how it should cause us more fully to realize the necessity of making a full surrender to His service. If our surrender is not complete, we shall never be welcomed by Jesus and the angels into the grand Summerland of Love. What a consolation to know that we are in reality preaching righteousness and a complete surrender as the only basis of salvation! It should strengthen us and cause our faith to grow exceedingly, and should impel us to have willing hearts and hands to perform the will of Him who has been so good as to enlighten the eyes of our understanding to perceive the difference between the old ancient gospel and the subterfuge of today as is promulgated in every clime and land.

We shall be paid amply for our little labor in life before we get half through being introduced to and chatting with good old Noah, who worked at the ark according to the instructions given by the Angel; and who was a Preacher of righteousness. What a pleasure to listen to him tell of how he pegged away at the old Ark with hammer, saw, and trowel, and between spells preached the same old blessed gospel of righteousness that we are preaching to those who will give a listening ear. And to think of how few he succeeded in getting to render obedience to the righteousness he preached!

And so few at this present time recognize the absolute necessity of rendering a full and complete obedience to all of God's requirements. Noah succeeded in getting only his own household to give a listening ear.

It is good to think over the Noachian time. It will enable us more fully to believe. It will be helpful to every God-fearing one to more seriously consider and realize that we are indeed the few in our day who have had a listening ear; and if we but render a proper obedience, we shall be safely carried over the soon coming storm that will rage with deafening roar and dreadful fury, carrying all outside the Ark, who will not listen, into the same vortex of destruction as in Noah's time. The soon coming deadly storm will become as real as it was in Noah's day. But alas; how few there are that believe it! Halt a moment and ask, Would any human mind ever

conceive of, or have thought of recording that only Noah and his household out of all the multitudes of humanity were saved?

Let us take a step forward from Noah to Abraham's day and see if we can trace the ancient gospel of righteousness as the basis of salvation. In Genesis 17:1 we are told of the first thing the Almighty required of him: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." In the plainest words, God laid down a holy walk, a full surrender as the basis of salvation.

As we step forward to Moses' day, we find a message of like import sent by him to God's people. "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people" (Ex. 19:5). He proclaimed these words unto Israel, showing that a full surrender and complete obedience to the law of God was requisite to salvation in that day.

We are sounding forth this same old gospel today, and the blessing is certain if we obey; while the curse is just as certain if we persist in disobedience. Hence how vital the need of taking greater heed to our every thought, word, act, and feeling, so we may be sure we are being obedient!

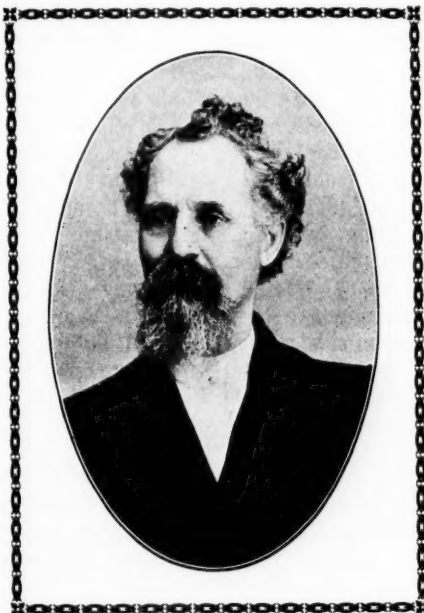
See the Prophetess Deborah proclaiming that "in the divisions of Reuben" there must be "great thoughts of heart," also "great searchings of heart" (Judges 5:15, 16).

See Hannah rejoicing in the Lord and consecrating herself and little Samuel to His service, rejoicing in God's salvation alone. She said, "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. . . . He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, . . . to

set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." But what of those who obey not the commandments of God? They "shall be silent in darkness; . . . the adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces" (I Sam. 2:3, 8-10).

Samuel the Prophet preached righteousness to the people, showing that no halfway work will suffice, but a full surrender is required; the whole heart must be wrapped up in serving the mighty and everlasting God. In I Sam. 12:23-25 he says, "I will teach you the good and the right way: Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you." He then adds, "But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed."

Notwithstanding that God has spoken so emphatically, how few believe in the least degree that He will do just



THE LATE REV. L. T. NICHOLS

as He has declared He will do! His words are read over by many—if read at all—as if they were meaningless; as if men could do as they pleased, have their own way, and at last, after serving self their whole life through, God would disregard His word and save them. No! He will do nothing of the kind. We must tremble at His word and be obedient. If we presume to reject His word, He shall certainly reject us when actions are weighed in the balances.

See Elijah, the only Prophet of the Lord left in Israel, telling wicked King Ahab that it was he and his house that troubled Israel in forsaking the commandments of the Lord.

The Psalms are filled with declarations from God, plainly setting forth the necessity of devoting one's entire attention to divine things and becoming pure of heart to be saved. Note the grand opening: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It will not do to perform the work mechanically, but our whole soul must enter in until it becomes our *delight* to do His will.

If we would always think of the grand results that are soon to follow, we then could do this with the greatest of pleasure. Think of blooming in more than a thousand times Eden beauty! It is enough to cause every honest-hearted one to perform the work with supreme delight.

The pleasures of sin are so fleeting, and in the end bring trouble, disease, and death. In contrast, pleasures of righteousness yield a hundredfold of joy and pleasure now, and in the "world to come" life everlasting, with a vigor of constitution with which to enjoy that which will surpass our fondest dreams. As we with loved ones enter Eternity's shore and grasp each other's hands in greeting and union, we shall begin to realize upon a much greater and grander scale what a blessing, what a wonderful blessing, has developed by our not walking in the counsel of the ungodly but finding our delight in the law of the Lord.

Amos heralds forth, "Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream," not just a little rivulet, but our righteousness must be as a mighty rushing stream (Amos 5:24).

Peter declares, "God is no respecter of persons: but

in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34, 35). The Apostle to us Gentiles speaks likewise, exhorting us to be "filled with the fruits of righteousness" (Phil. 1:11). The greatest way to *preach* righteousness is to be *filled* with righteousness—a living example of the indescribable benefits of a righteous life.

We have listened to testimony from the Prophets and Apostles and now Jesus Himself in His last message to mankind witnesses to the demands of our heavenly Father, saying, "Blessed are they that *do* his commandments" (Rev. 22:14).

These writers were scattered over fifteen hundred years, and yet they sound forth in one grand concert of voices, *Salvation by, and only by, remembering the commandments to do them.*

All those who are not only willing, but exceedingly anxious to use themselves with all their power and means to obtain these grand, magnificent, and more than wonderful blessings will indeed be worthy of them, and certainly will obtain them.

What a love shall then flow in every heart, what greetings, what a time of rejoicing that will be when those who are doing the commandments will be home in the wonderful glory together to share these blessings forevermore!

To think of being with Gabriel and hearing those melodious strains of praise and thanksgiving sounded forth to the All-wise Father whom we adore! There will be no end to becoming acquainted with all the joyous and happy ones, who are in one grand accord in the Kingdom of God.

Such homes they will have—it is beyond our fondest imaginations! This alone should cause every faithful one to separate himself from this vain world and live in harmony and sweet union with the old ancient Gospel.

Let each one say by every act: Lord, from this time on I will be wholly Thine; my head to meditate upon Thy law day and night; my tongue to tell of Thy wondrous works and speak of Thy great goodness all the day long; my hands to carry this blessed help to others; my feet to guide and walk in the narrow way; my affections to be set on things above; my heart to be filled with gratitude to God for His wonderful goodness to His children; all I have and am to spend and be spent to obtain for self and others this richest of all blessings—life and glory everlasting in the world to come.

No tongue on earth can ever tell
The joy that then will flow,
Because we have not walked in way
That all ungodly go.

We can but faintly realize
How great our joy will be;
Because we did not stand in way,
But did from sinners flee.

O brethren dear, let's work right hard
To be among that throng
Who'll greet each other in that day,
And sing that glad new song.

We cannot one afford to miss
This happy, blissful time;
Where all will meet in fond embrace,
In every stage and clime.

'Tis worth far more than all this world,
With all its fame and pleasure;
For there will roll such lovely joy,
Through ages without measure.

We must not ever follow self,
Or human heart so blind;
But follow on to know the Lord
With all our heart and mind.

We must not seek to please the world,
Nor self in any way;
But seek to please the mighty God
In all we do or say.

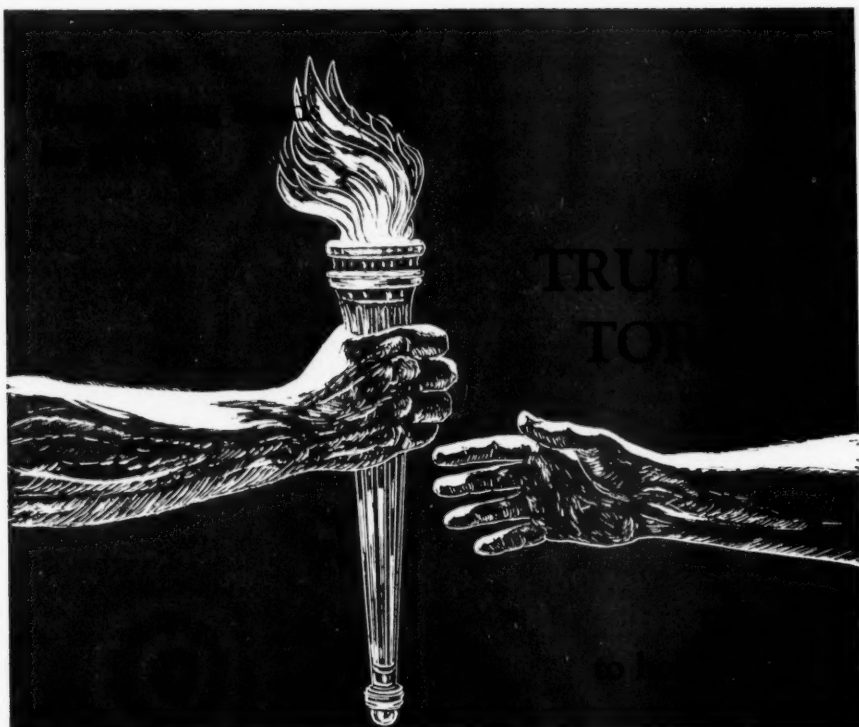
Thy will, O Lord, we each must say,
And not our own be done;
Then go to work and show by fruits,
Our word and action one.

No hypocrite will ever be
Allowed to enter rest;
The faithful only will be found
Among the truly blest.

We now must be a righteous tree
Whose fruit is precious, sweet,
And all we think or say or do
Must be at Jesus' feet.

We must not only *do* the word,
But do it with *delight*;
To enter that celestial bliss,
Beyond this weary night.

O brethren dear, let each one live
To please our God on high;
So we can live forever more,
In Kingdom now so nigh.



I

"And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

IT WAS NIGHT. For more than twelve centuries there had been not a glimmer of light in the universal blackness. The guiding light of the moon and stars had been blotted out by the all-enshrouding clouds of superstition. It was a night filled with terror and strange sounds, with cruelty and oppression, intolerance and suffering. Some six hundred years after the Sun of Righteousness ended His earthly probation and ascended to His Father, the torch of Truth had fallen from the hands of the Last Witness, that magnificent, nameless world figure, and there was no hand raised to take it up.

In the mire of great Babylon's streets it lay, unrecognized, trodden under foot day after day, year after year, century after century. The prophecies of Daniel and Jesus and Paul were veritably fulfilled: truth was cast to the earth; the saints of the Most High were worn out and destroyed; mankind had willingly been turned from the truth to fables. It was night.

But the longest night must have an end. Be it ever so dark and stifling, somewhere, over the rim of night, a "white tremendous daybreak" is waiting—waiting God's own appointed time.

It was not the Eternal's will that that sunrise should burst in upon a world in complete darkness. His re-

vealed plan called for a remnant—a very small, yet choice remnant—to be developed in the closing hours of the day of salvation, under the most difficult conditions, working out their salvation by faith alone, faith in the same Light which had guided the footsteps of His saints of old, the same Light by which the Last Witness had lived and died.

But this light had perished, to all intents and purposes. To restore it to usefulness would require a miracle. And a miracle was granted. The plan of God could not be thwarted. The miracle was not a spectacular thing like the feeding of a multitude or the raising of Lazarus, but the resurrection of Truth was no less a miracle in the truest sense of the word—"a sign of power."

The one thing needful to bring the miracle into being was a fit man. "Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again," but not of itself. God, whose face is invisible to mortal man, always works through instruments. The water from the rock was a sign of divine power, but it was Moses who held the rod which brought it forth. The destruction of the Midianite host was a miracle, but Gideon was needed to implement it. So through the dark centuries the patience of God waited for a man to appear equal to and worthy of the task. And in the fullness of time, a fit man appeared. From the dust of ancient error and superstition the Torch was rescued. Filled again with the oil of a perfect faith, touched by the flame of an honest, truth-loving heart, it

sprang into life. Feebly at first, then with growing brilliance, it shed abroad its glorious, healing rays.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

II

"And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?"

Two facts are evident to the honest student of the Bible and history: First, there was a long time when the Truth of God's word was extinguished; Second, in our day it again shines out. Something has happened, a reversal of conditions. It did not come of itself. We see in Truth's renaissance the lengthened shadow of a towering character, a man raised up by the Eternal for this very purpose.

By "raised up" we do not understand that this man was to be an automaton in the grip of forces he could not escape. Like God's faithful servants in all ages, he was a free agent, free to refuse or to fail. Had he done so, the work would have been done by another. Only surpassing honesty of soul and a consuming love of truth set him to his task and held him there until crowned with success. His success made him a figure for the ages; to us it has spelled our hope of life beyond death.

Who, then, is this "faithful and wise steward," this man of destiny? What manner of man might we expect to find equal to the assignment? We believe, on the firmest of evidence, that this son of prophecy was no less a personage than the man whom we honor on the anniversary of his birth, the Rev. L. T. Nichols. By his works we may know him.

He was born in Elkhart, Indiana, October 1, 1844, the son of Lemuel Truesdale and Emmeline Dunbar Nichols. His father was of English, his mother of Scots ancestry. Both were typical American pioneers in the best pattern: honest, hard-working, courageous, far above the average in aspiration for the higher values of life.

When young L. T. (his only given name) was five years old, his parents removed to the frontier State of Wisconsin, where he literally "grew up with the country." In the grim struggle for existence, there was little opportunity for formal education, and when, in his own early teens, his father's health failed, his young shoulders bore a heavy burden of responsibility and toil. Thus he grew up, a man of the people, yet set apart from the crowd by the very qualities which fitted him for the tremendous role he

was to play in the Eternal's drama of truth and salvation.

To those critics who might look askance at his humble social and educational background, we need only point to the background of the twelve Apostles, or to that of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, men whose impact upon history runs strong through nearly twenty centuries, while the learned pedants of Jerusalem and Athens and Alexandria, who disdained these fishermen and carpenters and tax-gatherers, passed from memory with their own generation.

Even in his childhood, L. T. Nichols displayed an extraordinary and alarming inquisitiveness in religious matters. Some of the doctrines received from his devout mother did not satisfy, and some outraged his precocious reason. The Bible early became his beloved and constant companion, accompanying him to school as well as to religious services which, by the way, were held in the log school-houses. In his early teens he was known as the "boy preacher." As his knowledge increased, his courage and zeal kept pace. In the assemblies his voice was often raised to challenge the theories proclaimed by the itinerant preachers, and to prove the exact opposite from the Bible. Many a storm raged around his youthful head, but through it all he held fast to the principle which was to be his guiding star: "Let God be true, though every man a liar."

During this period, as later in life, he was tempted with the offer of a salary, liberal for that day, to fill an "orthodox" pulpit. Although in very poor circumstances, he unhesitatingly refused the offer, for he saw that it would bind him to a system which he could not accept as truth. Throughout his life he held faithfully to the principle that the Gospel must be preached without charge.

As the swift years passed, his search for truth became more intense. As doctrine after doctrine of "orthodoxy" failed to stand the test of reason and evidence, he was driven inexorably to the conclusion that all the world had strayed from the narrow way charted by the Almighty. If truth and salvation were to be found, it would be only in the Scriptures. But the Book itself was under fire from the infidel world, and the objections could not be lightly dismissed. In so serious a matter, nothing could be taken for granted.

Educating himself in the Hebrew and Greek languages, he was able at last to show to the world a Bible free from every error—not a new Bible but the old, familiar Book freed from the human interpretations with which

it had become encumbered, and which had given rise to the seeming contradictions and absurdities falsely charged against it.

It is not the purpose of this article, nor does space permit, to relate the details of this stupendous battle and dazzling victory. Nor can we follow his steps to Oregon and Minnesota, the building of the steamer *Megiddo I*, and the missionary enterprise on the great rivers, nor can we tell of the intensive work which followed the settlement of his followers in Rochester. These things are told at greater length in the *History of the Megiddo Mission*.

To relate point by point the triumph of truth over error as the True Reformation took form under his hands would require a volume in itself. His outstanding achievement, and that which separated him once for all from spiritual Babylon, was his rejection of that basest of injustices, the pagan Atonement, replacing it with the true light of the Atonement, or salvation through character, a step which led inevitably to the principle of perfection—the keeping of every commandment of God. God's rewards were according to each man's work, not for the merits of another.

Now it could be truly said, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

So his life was lived, a pageant of triumph before God—a peerless leader, a loving spiritual father, and a shining example to the flock, until the Torch fell from his lifeless hands (February 28, 1912), to be caught up by an able successor and passed on, never again to be darkened.

III

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

"The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not," wrote the Evangelist (John 1:5). The world could not comprehend the light because it did not comprehend its own darkness. Eyes unaccustomed to light had learned to love darkness and the works thereof. The fables which entangled the minds of men had become very dear to them. And so it is to this day: men love darkness more than light, because their deeds are evil, (John 3:19), and evil is reproved by the light.

As a beam of sunlight may be broken down into its many colors, so the rays of Truth's torch may be ana-

lyzed, to assure ourselves that it is truth and not a false light. What is the nature of this all-powerful, all-revealing Light which we have beheld in the darkness? A few simple comparisons should be convincing.

"Know thyself," was a maxim of ancient wisdom. Who am I? What am I? The darkness would have men as gods, immortal by birth. The Light reveals man as mortal, agreeing with experience and true science; immortality is a conditional reward for righteousness (I Cor. 15:53,54; Rev. 22:12). The children of darkness die in expectation of an eternal home in heaven; the sons of light believe the promise of Jesus, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"—an earth transformed and glorified and annexed to God's infinite heavenly family (Eph. 3:14, 15).

In the deepest and most noisome dens of the kingdom of darkness is found the horrible doctrine of a vengeful Deity who, far worse than any human fiend, purposes to torment the wicked eternally in the flames of hell. How reassuring the Light: "The wages of sin is death"—absolute, final, eternal death.

From the murk of Oriental superstition comes a demonology which civilization should blush to retain. Belief in a monstrous devil, more powerful and far more successful than the Creator Himself, may tend to relieve man of some of his responsibilities but it savors of the jungle, and is entirely rejected by the Light, which portrays wicked men as devils (John 6:70), personifies sin as the supreme Adversary, and informs us that all evil proceeds, not from an unseen, malevolent spirit, but from the heart of man (Mark 7:20, 21).

From somewhere, for no sane reason, the powers of darkness dredged up the weird dogma of a Triune God, a concept incomprehensible even to its sponsors. Truth's torch proclaims, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." The Son, far from being His own Father, confessed His inferiority (John 14:28), and aspired only to perfect unity of mind and purpose (John 17:11).

Perhaps no more unjust or revolting doctrine was ever promulgated than the dark falsehood of original sin—the condemnation of an unborn race for the sin of an individual—and the equally abominable solution of the predicament, the appeasement of divine vengeance by the bloody and cruel sacrifice of an innocent Son. These twin errors are the whole foundation of the vast system of confusion wrongly called Christendom, and to reject them is to break with the whole system. This the great Light-

bearer did, cleanly and finally, when the Light revealed to his searching mind that "every man shall die for his own sins" (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:20), and that each individual is justified only by his own righteousness (Ps. 18:20), not by the righteousness or the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

Step by step the great Reformation went on, gaining strength and momentum with every elimination of error and illumination of truth, until at the close of a life spent unsparringly for God and his fellow men, the great Lamp stand of the latter days could say,

"As I stand upon the shore in the full blessed light of freedom, and see for me the ending of the weary centuries of darkness, I lift up my heart in thankfulness to God that I have His blessed Word, and by it have been made free from superstition, free to walk in the wonderful light of Truth."

IV

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."

The limitations of our mortal mind leave us no better basis of judging the value of a thing than its relation to or effect upon ourselves. So the Light of the Ages may justly be given the pragmatic test, and judged by what it has done or can do for the men and women who have come within its influence.

It is needless to say that it transforms lives; that is its one and only purpose. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." It may be argued that almost any faith can

transform the life of a sincere follower. This is true, to a degree, but not to the standard of the Eternal's requirements. A stream cannot rise higher than its fountainhead. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean (Job 14:4), nor can a perfect character be the product of a religion or philosophy which denies the possibility or the necessity of perfection.

Through the centuries when the Light has shone abroad, it has gathered to itself, "one of a city and two of a family," the choicest of humanity as material for the ruling aristocracy of the future Kingdom of God—144,000 kings and priests (Rev. 14:1; 5:9, 10) who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, "without fault before the throne of God." These are the perfect stones for the house of the Lord. Only Truth could have found and developed this glorious and glorified company.

To the soul adrift and bewildered in a world filled with confused and conflicting claims, the Light brings certainty, hope, and a comfort which nothing else can give. True, countless millions find comfort of a sort in a false hope; but only the true Light can give comfort which stands every test and investigation, a faith which is not "a resolute closing of the eyes to facts." To those who are content to live in a fool's paradise, the Light has no meaning and no appeal. But to those who have learned that it is possible to "prove all things" and still "hold fast that which is good," there is no comparison. "Come and see."

But it is what the Light can and will do in God's great future that is its true glory. For when the captains and rulers and mighty men of earth are sleeping their perpetual sleep (Jer. 51:57), those who have trusted their whole lives to its guidance and

followed it to the end of the road shall be enjoying the ecstatic bliss of immortality, equal to the angels of God, "neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:36).

V

"Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Into our keeping the eternal Light has been committed in these last days of Gentile times, to carry it forward until that white tremendous daybreak meets us on the road. The thought, when we consider our unworthiness, is awe-inspiring. We may refuse or neglect the responsibility, which is to cut ourselves off from the Source of light and place ourselves in outer darkness. Or we may accept it, humbly and reverently, and give it all that is in us.

The torch is still shining in a very dark world, buffeted by winds of opposition, drenched by the chill rains of doubt and indifference. It is our very great privilege to hold it aloft, to shield and trim and replenish it, and—most important of all—to reflect its life-giving beams in our every word and action.

It is not that the Light is in danger of going out or falling again to earth; the Eternal's promise is that the great tribulation of the Apostasy will never be repeated. If we fail, other hands will bear it forward and other heads receive the crown of life. "Look to yourselves." We alone are the gainers or the losers. Yet we are bound by more than the hope of future reward; we have a code of honor which forbids us to break faith with those who have lived and died for us.

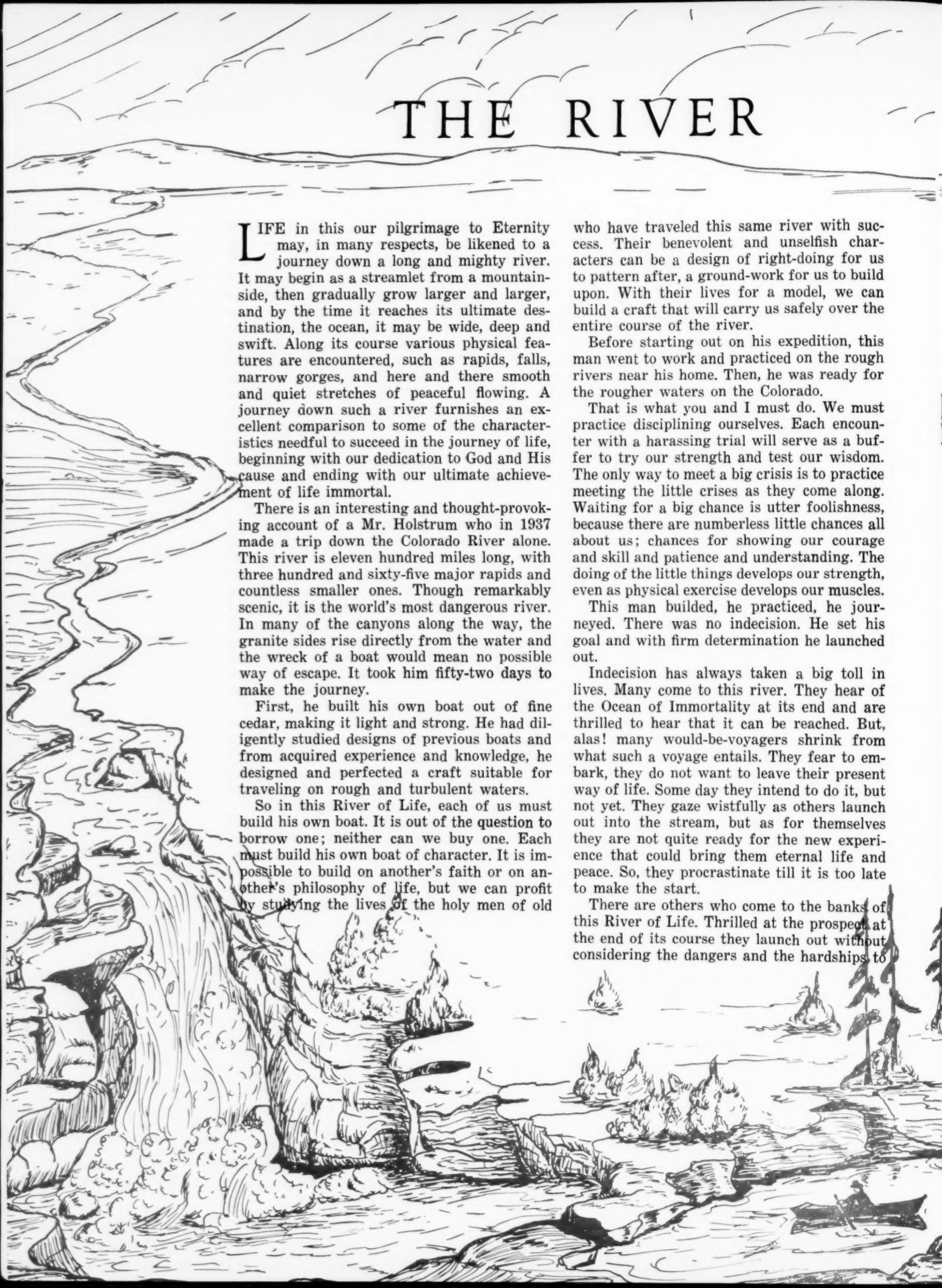
True worth is in being, not seeming,
In doing, each day that goes by,
Some little good—not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in their blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete as we measure—
We cannot do wrong and feel right,
Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,
For justice avenges each slight.
The air for the wing of the sparrow,
The bush for the robin and wren,
But always the path that is narrow
And straight, for the children of men.

We cannot make bargains for blisses,
Nor catch them like fishes in nets;
And sometimes the thing our life misses
Helps more than the thing which it gets.
For good lieth not in pursuing,
Nor gaining of great nor of small,
But just in the doing and doing
As we would be done by, is all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating
Against the world, early and late,
No jot of our courage abating—
Our part is to work and to wait.
And slight is the sting of his trouble
Whose winnings are less than his worth;
For he who is honest is noble,
Whatever his fortunes or birth.

THE RIVER



LIFE in this our pilgrimage to Eternity may, in many respects, be likened to a journey down a long and mighty river. It may begin as a streamlet from a mountain-side, then gradually grow larger and larger, and by the time it reaches its ultimate destination, the ocean, it may be wide, deep and swift. Along its course various physical features are encountered, such as rapids, falls, narrow gorges, and here and there smooth and quiet stretches of peaceful flowing. A journey down such a river furnishes an excellent comparison to some of the characteristics needful to succeed in the journey of life, beginning with our dedication to God and His cause and ending with our ultimate achievement of life immortal.

There is an interesting and thought-provoking account of a Mr. Holstrum who in 1937 made a trip down the Colorado River alone. This river is eleven hundred miles long, with three hundred and sixty-five major rapids and countless smaller ones. Though remarkably scenic, it is the world's most dangerous river. In many of the canyons along the way, the granite sides rise directly from the water and the wreck of a boat would mean no possible way of escape. It took him fifty-two days to make the journey.

First, he built his own boat out of fine cedar, making it light and strong. He had diligently studied designs of previous boats and from acquired experience and knowledge, he designed and perfected a craft suitable for traveling on rough and turbulent waters.

So in this River of Life, each of us must build his own boat. It is out of the question to borrow one; neither can we buy one. Each must build his own boat of character. It is impossible to build on another's faith or on another's philosophy of life, but we can profit by studying the lives of the holy men of old

who have traveled this same river with success. Their benevolent and unselfish characters can be a design of right-doing for us to pattern after, a ground-work for us to build upon. With their lives for a model, we can build a craft that will carry us safely over the entire course of the river.

Before starting out on his expedition, this man went to work and practiced on the rough rivers near his home. Then, he was ready for the rougher waters on the Colorado.

That is what you and I must do. We must practice disciplining ourselves. Each encounter with a harassing trial will serve as a buffer to try our strength and test our wisdom. The only way to meet a big crisis is to practice meeting the little crises as they come along. Waiting for a big chance is utter foolishness, because there are numberless little chances all about us; chances for showing our courage and skill and patience and understanding. The doing of the little things develops our strength, even as physical exercise develops our muscles.

This man builded, he practiced, he journeyed. There was no indecision. He set his goal and with firm determination he launched out.

Indecision has always taken a big toll in lives. Many come to this river. They hear of the Ocean of Immortality at its end and are thrilled to hear that it can be reached. But, alas! many would-be-voyagers shrink from what such a voyage entails. They fear to embark, they do not want to leave their present way of life. Some day they intend to do it, but not yet. They gaze wistfully as others launch out into the stream, but as for themselves they are not quite ready for the new experience that could bring them eternal life and peace. So, they procrastinate till it is too late to make the start.

There are others who come to the banks of this River of Life. Thrilled at the prospect at the end of its course they launch out without considering the dangers and the hardships to

OF LIFE

be encountered, nor do they make the necessary preparation for such a voyage. Among these, the degree of endurance varies. Some return at the first rapids or hardship and go back to their former mode of life. Others go on and pass many of the treacherous passages, and appear to be in earnest and intent upon gaining their goal, but the distance proves longer than they first anticipated, causing weariness. There is no turning back for them, for at this stage of the voyage they cannot retreat. They relax their vigil and drift rather heedlessly. And thus, many meet their end in the treacherous waters because of insufficient faith to carry them on through every hardship, through every storm, however long the way may be.

But how few have chosen intelligently to navigate the entire course of this river!

The man who traveled on the Colorado found that it took much skill and ingenuity to reach his destination safely. So it is with us. God wants stalwart men of resolute minds and fixed purpose. The River of Life is the proving ground for a severe testing of one's character. To test a man, God does not give him continual fair weather and smooth sailing. He gives him difficulties and hardships. Every phase of his life is tested—his will power, his affections, his desires, and his endurance.

On the Colorado, Mr. Holstrum encountered many a situation which taught him that he should travel "light." He found there was little, if any, drifting with the current. There were too many rapids which he had to "run" and "jump." Many, many times he had to cut across the current to avoid hidden rocks and treacherous whirlpools. Since a heavily weighted boat caused much hard rowing in tight places, he threw overboard, along the way, all excess baggage, the impedimenta—all things not absolutely essential to making his voyage a success. Thus, he was free to travel surely and swiftly.

So on this River of Life, you and I must travel "light." We find as we progress, that many things which seemed necessary at the

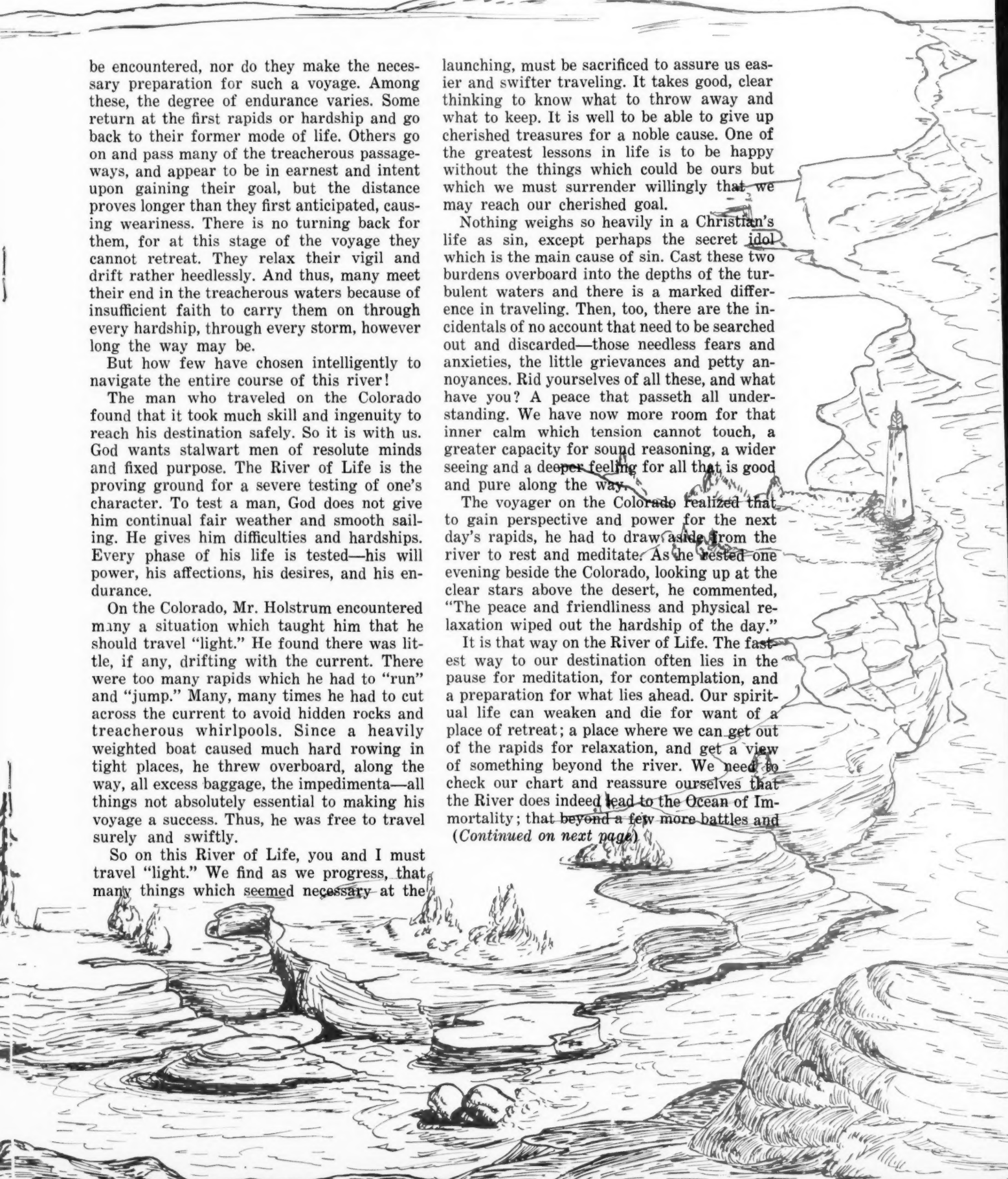
launching, must be sacrificed to assure us easier and swifter traveling. It takes good, clear thinking to know what to throw away and what to keep. It is well to be able to give up cherished treasures for a noble cause. One of the greatest lessons in life is to be happy without the things which could be ours but which we must surrender willingly that we may reach our cherished goal.

Nothing weighs so heavily in a Christian's life as sin, except perhaps the secret idol which is the main cause of sin. Cast these two burdens overboard into the depths of the turbulent waters and there is a marked difference in traveling. Then, too, there are the incidentals of no account that need to be searched out and discarded—those needless fears and anxieties, the little grievances and petty annoyances. Rid yourselves of all these, and what have you? A peace that passeth all understanding. We have now more room for that inner calm which tension cannot touch, a greater capacity for sound reasoning, a wider seeing and a deeper feeling for all that is good and pure along the way.

The voyager on the Colorado realized that to gain perspective and power for the next day's rapids, he had to draw aside from the river to rest and meditate. As he rested one evening beside the Colorado, looking up at the clear stars above the desert, he commented, "The peace and friendliness and physical relaxation wiped out the hardship of the day."

It is that way on the River of Life. The fastest way to our destination often lies in the pause for meditation, for contemplation, and a preparation for what lies ahead. Our spiritual life can weaken and die for want of a place of retreat; a place where we can get out of the rapids for relaxation, and get a view of something beyond the river. We need to check our chart and reassure ourselves that the River does indeed lead to the Ocean of Immortality; that beyond a few more battles and

(Continued on next page)



trials and testings the goal we so earnestly seek is certain. Such a soul-rest is necessary, else the spirit dies of strangulation amid the burdens of the day; and life burns out for want of renewal.

The waters sometimes enter a deep canyon and are squeezed in between walls of rock that rise almost perpendicularly to a great height. Here shadows and gloom follow the river for miles. So it is in many lives. The shadows are grim and deep but if the radiance of a perfect trust is in one's heart, he can say with the psalmist, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." Or sometimes, there looms up a sheer wall of rock in the river's path. The passage is barred. The waters simply disappear in the fissures. For the time being the obstruction is appalling.

Sorrow and sickness can be just like that—seemingly insurmountable—but that is no time to despair. This is the time to build up and increase that wavering faith. He who planned the way is guiding our every step. We must learn to lean a little harder upon Him who cares, draw closer to Him in our thoughts. Then, when we lay aside all our self-sufficiency and realize our own littleness in His great plan, and reach out for help from Him who is always standing by, waiting to help us, then, lo, a way opens up. We now resume our journey refreshed and strengthened by the experience.

And so on and on we travel from one experience to another, gaining patience here and humility there, till our voyage ends. The watching and toiling and struggling will then be over. One by one as we finish our course, we take our place in the Harbor of Eternity. Lying peacefully at anchor, will be found the vessels, which, when last seen, were heading down the River of Life. These few made it successfully! Oh happy hour when each craft, with banners of perfection flying, will answer the bugle call to leave the moorings and join the Master Mariner, Christ. He will sail on ahead, leading us into the vast Ocean of Immortality. Before us will stretch the broad expanse of unmeasurable joys and heavenly bliss. We shall be abundantly satisfied, ocean without end!

Parents

Parents surely have a task to do
To rear up children kind and true.

Start right early and take this cue,
Lest the children try to bring up you.

A tender twig can be bent from wrong;
But 'tis oft too late when old and strong.

Do not let the child whine all day,
For such is bound to have his way.

Don't talk and talk and "cluck" away,
It shows you do not mean just what you say.

When you correct if comes a screeching sound,
It is well to know you are losing ground.

When neighbors enter to speak a word,
Children may be seen but not be heard;

To your boy or girl give a task each day,
Thus teach them life is more than play.

One can wash the dishes and sweep the floor;
Another can dust the furniture o'er;

Some can save Mother a step or two,
And say to Father, "Can I help you?"

A little reward is often due,
For it helps the child and parents, too.

Never punish when in anger stirred,
In patience let your voice be heard;

Then that child of yours will always see
It is true love that is leading thee.

At the table, too, give thanks in love
For all the bounties from God above;

So the child can see that the blessings fall
For those who upon our God now call.

Too oft when children to table come,
They want dessert e'er the meal's begun.

They turn up the nose and will not eat
Food our fathers would have called a treat.

They muss and fuss and push aside
Good things for which children oft have cried.

Right here parents must take a firm stand,
Or their small children will lead the band.

Teach here the lesson and be not slack;
Let them eat what's good, and *not talk back*.

And when other children "jump the track,"
Teach your child he must *never strike back*.

But little peacemakers try to be,
So they will live in sweet harmony.

Teach children to use the thankful key,
No matter what the occasion be.

When your children read, you watch the stream,
For many pages are so unclean!

Tell them from strangers always to flee,
No matter what the attraction be.

To never linger upon the street;
Run home to Mother, her face to greet.

Parents, when the busy day is done,
Gather near the children, one by one,

And tell them a story good and true
About our God and Saviour, too.

Let them sing with joyful hearts,
And be sure the parents take their part.

Then offer to God a thankful prayer
For all the blessings His children share.

Then when the passing years all have flown,
And your children to adulthood have grown,

Some will look back and thankfully say,
"Thank God, I was brought up in just that way!"

—The Editor.

Life With a Purpose

HISTORY gives us examples of men who devoted their lives to some great cause. If the cause has proved to be one of benefit to mankind, such men are honored and revered.

The record of America, since its discovery, contains many such examples. Let us consider, for a moment, the lives and the feelings of such men themselves. Look, for instance, at Columbus. He was a man of clear mind and keen insight. By deep study and serious thought he became so assured with reference to his cause that he was able to convince the queen of Spain to finance his venture. His vision was so bright that he could face the dangers of the unknown deep and with strong and unfaltering commands could influence his rebellious crew to "Sail On." Here was a man on fire with zeal and determination. He knew he was right. It is as difficult to imagine the great faith he must have had in the logic of his course as it is to grasp the intense satisfaction that was surely his as his feet felt the firm shore of the new world. He was a happy man. His was a life with a purpose.

It is said that, as a youth, Lincoln determined, with reference to slavery, "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it and hit it hard." He found the satisfaction of a life with a purpose. His was a moral issue and moral issues appeal to the best in the best men. They reward their champions with pure pleasure.

But these are affairs of mankind. The noblest lives of purpose are those for God. Here is a field of inspiration from which to draw that is unequaled in history. In the affairs of God we behold purpose and design brought to its highest development. And so it is in the lives of men and women of God. The purpose in their lives is of a higher caliber and far more enduring than any of earth.

We might profitably dwell on any of the worthies of old and there behold the beauty and fascination of a life with a purpose. Paul, who is our special Apostle, was an outstanding example of life with a purpose. It would be hard not to talk about Paul in this connection. If we could but place ourselves in his place for a moment, what a stimulating experience we should have. First, our vision and assurance of the future would immediately become clear and bright. Then our understanding of ourselves and our fellow men would resolve into sharper focus. Add to this an intense love of life and humanity in an energetic, vigorous body, and we have Paul—a life with a purpose. His words reflect the conviction that is the special trait of genius in any age. "I press toward the mark." "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." With such a life with a purpose, can any doubt that Paul was happy? Could anything dampen his zeal? Did he fear anything on earth? No, he had caught a vision and thus he pushed forward, resting in the promise of God that temporal circumstances could always be resolved for good. His was a happy life with a purpose.

One of the most wonderful things about the life with a purpose for God is that it is always assured of success. Further, it is promised happiness and sufficient in temporal blessings for this life. Though the life of Paul was full of trials and difficulties, who would doubt he enjoyed

his career. Though his last days were dark, who could say his life was not a success. Who, in fact, would not like to be a Paul?

Christ, the Captain of our salvation, lived a life of purpose so intensely that His earthly career was completed in a remarkably short time. Such a life could alter the entire course of human affairs, though the active phase of it was but three years long.

Close to our hearts is the purposeful life of our founder, the Rev. L. T. Nichols. His is a record of faith and vision, zeal and progress that made possible the great work of God for these latter days. It would be difficult for us, as ordinary individuals, to grasp the comfort and happiness he must have derived from his life with a purpose. The exhilaration that such a life must feel would surely be a balm for many a trial. Many an ill would disappear in the face of the spirit of such a man.

Friend, if you would know the better life,
Have a purpose true;
If you would now be happy,
Learn what God would have you do.

Any life can be enriched if it has a worthy purpose. Any life can be happier if it has a clear direction. It can have inner quietness and serenity if it has an unselfish code in serving others. But if you would know the best and highest, then live a life of purpose *for God*. Here is a challenge equal to any ability and it offers a satisfaction equal to any hunger. Only in the life of purpose for God can the deepest voids of the human heart be filled. In God's service the desire for the highest pleasures in life can be satisfied. But best of all His purpose is to lead His own into the very heart of His own life with a purpose.

"BE STRONG:

Your Work Shall be Rewarded"

IN OUR study of the Word of God we find that He often gave to His children the command: "Be strong." The Lord would not have given this command if strength were something that mankind already possessed. The word "strong" means "great moral power, firmness, fortitude, courage or force of character." It takes firmness, courage and force of character to rise above the earth level. Therefore, moral strength is a virtue which every true Christian must possess.

How does one become strong? As physical strength is acquired by the exercise of physical power, so spiritual strength comes through the exercise of our moral faculties, by resisting evil in every form, by casting down our idols and every thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (Job 17:9). Thus we learn that to become strong we must wash and become clean, cease to do evil and learn to do well. Every temptation we successfully resist, every idol we uproot, makes us stronger in the work of the Lord.

Let us for a moment turn to the pages of history and read about one of the kings of Judah who was commanded to be strong—King Asa. When he became king

after the death of his father, he immediately took away the altars of the strange gods and broke down the images and cut down the groves. Under his reign, Judah lived peacefully with the surrounding nations for a number of years, but finally the Ethiopians made war against them. King Asa cried unto the Lord for help, and his prayer was answered, for we read: "So the Eternal routed the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah. The Ethiopians fled, pursued by Asa and his men as far as Gerar; so many Ethiopians were killed that not one remained alive; they were broken before the Eternal and his army" (II Chron. 14: 12, 13, Moffatt).

After the battle, the army marched victoriously back to Jerusalem with the rich spoil which they had taken from their enemies. "At that time the spirit of God came upon Azariah, the son of Obed, so that he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, 'Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin! The Lord has been with you, because you have been true to him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you. . . . But be strong, and let not your hands slacken, for your work shall be rewarded.'

"Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Obed the prophet, he took courage and put away the abominations from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had taken from the highlands of Ephraim" (II Chron. 15: 1, 9, Am. Translation).

The words which the prophet of the Lord spoke to King Asa resound across the centuries to us: "Be strong." Are we letting these words move us to act as did the King of Judah long ago? They did not fall upon his ears unheeded, but he immediately went to work to remove all the idols from the land. Literal idolatry was the plague of that nation, but we have set up idols in our hearts (Ezek. 14: 3)—affections, possessions, interests—which prevent wholehearted devotion to God. Are we taking courage and working at the task of putting away these things which are an abomination in the sight of the Lord our God.

As we begin the work of tearing down our idols, perhaps we view them as small and think that their removal can be accomplished with ease. But alas! We find that they are very firmly planted; and, as we pursue the task of attempting to dislodge them, their stature seems only to increase before us. Then is the time to listen to the call: "Be strong." Perhaps we are just beginning to see ourselves as we are. When the idol looms up before us in all its towering hideousness, we are simply recognizing in its true proportions the evil which formerly we had minimized. Remembering the words of Paul, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man," we can take courage and work the harder, knowing that we are not the first or only ones who have idols to break down and destroy. It has been done before by all the worthies of old; and what they have done we can do, if we will daily, bit by bit, add strength to our character.

God is no respecter of persons; He will not overlook our idol simply because we feel that it is too much hard work to remove it. Remember, with the command "Be strong," also comes the assurance that *our work shall be rewarded*. When these words were spoken to King Asa, they imparted courage to him to continue his battle against idolatry. And when we look forward to the reward offered—endless, immortal, radiant, happy life in

company with loving friends—we too will take courage.

God does not ask us to work for Him without offering us a reward for so doing. Paul gave us this assurance when he said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15: 58). No labor of love shall pass by unnoticed. No struggle against sin shall be forgotten. God is a good Paymaster and will repay us for everything we do in His service. But let us continually add more strength to the strength we already possess, that we may gain the full reward. Let us be satisfied with nothing less than the supreme strength that is possible for mortal man to attain, even the strength of perfection.

THE KING'S BUSINESS

I have an assignment that I must fulfill,
And nothing shall hinder my progress until
I hear from the lips of my Saviour, "Well done!"
And have the assurance of victory won.
I gladly accept this position of trust,
And think the conditions both proper and just,
In view of the present and future reward;
Exceedingly more than the world can afford.

Called to go forth to a sin-darkened world,
To hold up the Light, with His Banner unfurled,
I am an ambassador unto the King,
And by His direction glad tidings I bring.
Yes, I am commissioned to tell of the day
When Christ shall return, to forever hold sway,
And spread His dominion all over the earth,
With wisdom dispensing the grand Spirit birth.

My duty is plain, to turn sinners to God,
By word and example extolling His Rod;
So living that others the Christ life may see
In all of its beauty reflected in me.
The words that I speak must be meant to inspire
The hearers with hope, and a fervent desire
To work for a better, a much richer life:
With naught said to foment a ripple of strife.

The flag that I carry, the banner of Truth,
Must wave in the breeze, an incentive to youth
To enter the ranks of the fearless and brave,
Who long to deliver some soul from the grave.
I must not permit it to drag in the dust,
This glorious Flag of the Holy and Just;
Nor lie in disuse, to accumulate grime—
For He must *increase* with the passing of time.

My work is not in a competitive field,
For few can be found proudly wearing the shield
That speaks of His coming; the doubters prevail,
Who cry from the house-tops, "God's prophecies fail!"
Their efforts are toward decadence and gloom,
For Faith, Hope, and Charity having no room.
They live for the moment, to die in despair,
With none to remember, and no one to care.

But I take delight in proclaiming the news
That Jesus will come, and Jerusalem choose
To be earth's metropolis, there holding sway,
Supreme in dominion and glory for aye.
Yes, I am ambassador unto the King,
And this is my business, His praises to sing;
Preparing to greet Him, and echo the cry,
"Behold, all ye doubters—the King draweth nigh!"

Musings of the Editor

I SAW a pale mourner stand trembling over the tomb, and his tears fell fast and often. As he raised his weeping eyes to heaven he cried: "My brother! Oh, my brother!"

A sage passed that way and asked: "For what dost thou mourn?"

"For one," replied he, "whom I did not sufficiently love while living; but one whose inestimable worth I now feel."

"What wouldst thou do if heaven restored him to thee?" asked the sage.

The mourner replied that he would never offend him by an unkind word, but would take every opportunity to show his friendship, if he could come back to his embrace.

The Alabaster Box "Then waste no time in useless grief," said the sage, "but if thou hast true and faithful friends, go and cherish the living; remembering that they will one day pass from thy presence."

We live in a world where nothing is sure. Today our friends are about us in the freshness and bloom of health and spirits; tomorrow we bend in anguish over their still form; and it is well if no bitter regrets mingle with the tears we shed over their white faces. Oh, life is insecure, and the brightest and most promising of all our treasures may perhaps soonest droop and fade. And when one does, how anxious men are to do them homage! They step forward to speak of their virtues, they excuse their faults, and too often spread a mantle of so-called charity over their vices.

In life or death a Christian can neither justify the wicked nor condemn the just. Both positions are an abomination unto the Lord. And yet too often we miss the golden opportunity to render acts of kindness to the living. Too often we have spoken bitter and cruel words for kindness; too often our hand has failed to help them bear the burden, when with a little help they would have lifted the load. Too often we have said, "Be warmed and fed," and failed to give that which was at our side. Oh, the good we all can do while these evil days are passing by! Oh, the joy, the peace, the comfort we can give through all this toiling and weeping! It is too late to soothe and benefit those who sleep in death. We may not take up the broken threads of the life that is gone, and weave them into a web of hope and joy; but toward those who are still left us, who have ears to hear and hearts to throb with pain and grief, we may be generous and just, forgiving, loving and kind.

Do not wait till the faithful ones who have labored hard and long to fill your life with the richest and brightest pleasures—I say, do not wait till the golden days of opportunity have fled and gone. No funeral pomp or costly monument with loving words inscribed thereon will ever make up for past neglect. Oh, could those fond words of endearment that now fall upon the vacant chair have been given to them while living! What joy, what peace and happiness might have been theirs!

Do not wait till the hands of the tired, patient mother are folded over the heart that has so often thrilled with

joy or beaten wildly with pain on your account, to do her homage. By the memory of all the loving offices she has performed for you from infancy all the way up to manhood and womanhood, keep your love for her deep and ardent, dutifully respect and reverence her, repay with interest the tender love and care that she has lavished upon you, and strive to make her last days restful, happy and peaceful.

Be especially kind to the children. The world will deal harshly enough with them; it is a rough world at the best. Surround them with an atmosphere of love and instill into their hearts noble feelings and principles of Truth while you may; for sooner than you think, other and less holy influences will be brought to bear upon them.

Be ever ready and willing to uphold the hands of those of like precious faith; be ever ready to help a brother lift the heavy load. Ah, yes, "bear ye one another's burdens." Be kind to the sad, the sorrowful; support the weak. Kind words of cheer and kindly acts cannot hurt them. O brethren, beloved, by longsuffering and kindness, while you have time and opportunity, do good unto all men.

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled by them. The things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their caskets, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary hours and open them that I may be refreshed and cheered by them when I need them. I would rather have a bare casket without a flower and a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of brotherly love and sympathy.

Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post-mortem kindnesses do not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the casket cast no fragrance backward over the weary days.

Announcement

Memorial Services are to be conducted at the Megiddo Mission Church on September 30 and October 1 in commemoration of the birthday of our beloved founder, the Rev. L. T. Nichols.

Sunday, September 30:

10:30 A. M. Morning Worship
7:30 P. M. Religious Drama

Monday, October 1:

8:00 A. M. Quiet Hour Service
3:00 P. M. Services at the Cemetery
7:45 P. M. Special Service

All are cordially invited to attend.

Meditations

On the Word

"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest; because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction" (Micah 2: 10).

If intent upon obtaining a life better than the present, with its limitations—its toil, care, reverses and frustrations—action on our part is imperative. We are confronted with a definite proposition, "arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." As creatures of earth, we are subject to the limitations of mortality. The Psalmist described the normal life span as "threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength . . . fourscore years (90: 10). Through carelessness and indifference to the rules of safety we can shorten our stay—or we may terminate our life any time that we so desire. By careful living we may heighten our chances of a full life span.

In view of the foregoing observations we have but one sensible alternative, and that is to use our time in working for something more than what we can see with our eyes and touch with our fingers. This attitude may be termed "other-worldliness." Confident that this life is not all that God can give, that the present is only the means to an end and not an end in itself, we will feel constrained to obey the divine injunction: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 2: 3). But sustaining this position takes work, sacrifice, and the most realistic approach. The things we see all about us at close range loom large. If not alert, we shall come to the conclusion that this *is* our rest, that there is nothing better to be had. Thinking thus, we shall say, Let us eat, drink, and make the most of today, for tomorrow we may die.

The fleeting things of the present being so much nearer, we are apt to be unduly influenced by them. The category is large: Our pleasant homes, our friends and associates, our worldly possessions, all worldliness, the things of the present. We should remind ourselves again and again that this is not our rest, and that if we allow it to shine in our interest as the highest goal it is really polluted, a form of pollution that makes us cool to the more magnificent interests of the world to come.

During recent years we have heard much about displaced persons. In a deeper sense each person who is living for eternity is a displaced person. He, like the Patriarch Abraham, confesses he has no abiding city, that he is a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, and that he looks for a city to come, whose Founder and Builder is God. The displaced person is a person seeking a home in another country among friendly foreigners, and he realizes the need for action if he would achieve his goal. He first must arise and separate himself from any connection with his old homeland; then he must actually pull up stakes and make a move. Depart, is the action word that describes his need.

This temporal life with its associations, which our meditation text describes as a state which is *not* our

rest, is polluted in many ways. Under the Mosaic arrangement the children of Israel, in any one of a number of circumstances, could render themselves unclean. If a person touched the dead, or touched another person who had touched the dead, he became unclean. Even the tent where a person had died was considered unclean, and each person who had entered that tent, as well as the utensils and furnishings, became unclean. To purify them the water of separation had to be sprinkled upon them. And even the person who did the sprinkling of the water was in that way rendered unclean for the remainder of the day (Numbers 19).

Likewise it is easy for the seeker of the heavenly country to become polluted by worldliness in any form. We are commanded, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2: 15, 16). "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing," is the divine injunction (II Cor. 6: 17).

In Revelation 18 we are adjured to come out of Babylon that we be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues. Babylon, in Scripture phraseology, often symbolizes the confused state of mankind as a whole, many men of many minds; but it also includes us who bear the name of Christian when we surrender to our own evil propensities, and the interests that have only to do with such inconsequentials as, "what shall we eat, what shall we drink, wherewith shall we be clothed?" Jesus warned: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21: 34).

A little pride, a little anger, a little self-esteem, a little stubbornness, a little seeking the honor of men, a few words spoken at random with no thought of their effect on the hearer: any one of these common evils can pollute us and make our abode an unfit place for one seeking that better world.

The slightest slackening of our vigilance can bewitch us into believing that the present is our rest, that we already are experiencing the ultimate of success and that there is nothing more to be desired, while the truth is that worldly things are not forever; our temporal homes are but a depot, only a place of "wayfaring men" where we can tarry but a night. The Psalmist was other-worldly minded when he said: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps. 17: 15). He longed to experience the blessed immortal state, to have his mortal body changed and made like the angels of God, but he was fully aware that before he could experience that physical change into God's likeness he must first become one with Him mentally and morally through acquiring the knowledge of His law and faithfully applying it to his daily living.

Let us never rest or be content with the *status quo*, with things as they are or with ourselves as we are. Let us never look back toward or live in the past, but ever maintain the youthful look, looking ahead, looking up, looking beyond the fleeting present to the eternal future.

Your Questions Answered



BIBLICAL PERSONAL CURRENT

Do you have a question? Personal replies will be sent to Biblical questions to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. **THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE** will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

What is the definition of the word "propitiation" as used in I John 2: 2; 4: 10?

"Propitiation," according to Webster, means, "To appease and render favorable; . . . to conciliate." Theologically it has come to mean the theory of the self-sacrifice and death of Christ, viewed as appeasing divine justice and effecting reconciliation between God and man. They call it the atonement. Propitiation needs to be studied in connection with reconciliation and at-one-ment which are frequently used in the New Testament.

The doctrine of the atonement is one of the fables to which humanity have been turned (II Tim. 4: 3, 4). Properly pronounced, the word is "at-one-ment." It means, as used in Rom. 5: 11, "A change from enmity to friendship, reconciliation, . . . reconciliation through change, . . . a thorough change." In II Cor. 5: 19 we read that God had "committed unto us the word of reconciliation," and in verse 20 Paul urges: "Be ye reconciled to God." It is by obedience to the will of God that we become reconciled to God and make the Bible at-one-ment.

Christ is the propitiation for our sins in the sense that He became our perfect example (I Pet. 2: 21). He showed us how that by living a holy life we can become at one with God and merit His favor—the whole world likewise can do the same, for He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (II Pet. 3: 9). Note verse 3 of I John 2: "And hereby we do know him, if we keep his commandments." Truly our salvation and entrance to the Holy City depends on our keeping the commandments (Rev. 22: 12, 14), and thereby only can our position be rendered favorable with God.

God first loved us in that He has placed the gift of life eternal before us, where as yet we had no thought of Him. Then if we draw near to Him He will draw near to us (James 4: 4); if we cleanse ourselves and put away all sin He will not hide His face from us (Isa. 1: 16; 55: 6, 7; 59: 1, 2).

Please explain Romans Fourteen.

Romans 14 seems to have been written as a rebuke to those who follow the all too common practice of trying to prescribe for others the same rules for secular living as one finds it necessary to prescribe for himself. This tendency is especially noticeable in the matter of diet, which appears to be the main theme of the chapter. Verse 1 reads, "Welcome a man of weak faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his scruples" (Moffatt).

Oneness of mind and perfect agreement among all members of the true Church or body of Christ upon every question affecting our salvation is demanded (I Cor. 1: 10). One simple phrase covering the entire Christian duty occurs in I Cor. 10: 31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." On this vital demand there must be perfect agreement and full compliance. But to accomplish this, all loyal Christians do not have to follow precisely the same pattern of daily living. In the matter of eating, one person enjoying excellent digestion may be able to eat any type of food in any reasonable quantity and still feel fine. Another person, who has a weak stomach, may have to be very careful about his diet, and often refrain from eat-

ing. The small eater would have no right to charge the heavy eater with gluttony, or the heavy eater to charge the light eater with undue fussiness. Every man must answer to his own master. God is our Master (Rom. 14: 4, Moffatt). "The eater eats to the Lord, since he thanks God for his food; the non-eater abstains to the Lord, and he too thanks God" (v. 6, Moffatt).

Romans 14 applies the same rule to one's estimation of days. "This man rates one day above another, while that man rates all days alike" (v. 5, Moffatt). Now the minimum demand is that every day be spent to the glory of God. That accomplished, our actual estimation of the individual days is inconsequential. For example, one person works an uninterrupted five day week schedule; he is always free to worship on the established day for worship. Another derives his livelihood from a type of employment where the work has to be done every day in the week, making it necessary for him to work, part of the time at least, on the accustomed day for worship. This he can do to the glory of God, so long as he does not neglect to assemble some other day, and exhort and be exhorted to love and good works (Heb. 10: 25).

An enlightening key to Romans 14 is verse 13: "So let us stop criticizing one another; rather make up your mind never to put any stumbling-block or hindrance in your brother's way" (Moffatt).

Is the Battle of Armageddon yet future in this Machine Age, or did it take place in the past when wars were fought with horses?

The Battle of Armageddon is the war that will be fought by the earthly forces of evil against the army of the Lord. Unquestionably the nations will use whatever implements of war they have available in the attempt to defeat Christ, the King of kings, and continue their evil practices. The horses of Revelation 6 are symbolic and have no reference to a literal rider on a literal horse, but represent Christ going forth in power to subdue the forces of evil.

In Hosea 2: 11 we read, "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts." To what time does the Prophet refer; to the period after Christ, or to the eternal Day of Rest?

As the nation of Israel apostatized, their feast days and sabbaths—which were a part of the Mosaic Law—became nothing more than an outward formality. The Lord was not pleased with them, as Isaiah related (ch. 1: 11—15). With the coming of Christ and the institution of a higher and better law, the old law with its ceremonies, feasts and sacrifices all passed away. We know these things passed away at that time, for Paul clearly testified, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. . . . Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Gal. 3: 19, 24).

Were people saved on earth before Christ came?

No one is saved yet, nor will anyone be saved till Christ comes to bring salvation (Isa. 25: 9; 35: 4). God has been calling men and women to work for Him since Adam's day, and thus merit salvation. Read Hebrews 11, of the long list of faithful ones. These are just a few of all those who labored for the eternal salvation which Christ will give to all at His return (v. 40).



There is a Limit to the Day of Salvation

a moment beyond the time He has allotted to man for his probation. When the hour strikes, He will act!

To us, time means everything. Every change in the hourglass, every moment on the sun dial, every revolution of the hand on the face of the clock, or every tick of the second, means time gone beyond recall.

It is true, in this busy and rushing world, it seems we are often pressed to the limit to perform the necessary things in connection with our livelihood, and therefore have little or no time for the spiritual things. Regardless of this, the record of the ages reveals that men who rose highest in spiritual attainment were men who were already burdened with endless temporal duties. But along with the daily activities they trained their minds to think of God's handiwork, and His law, and to direct their lives by the principles of truth and justice.

Assuming that all our activities are legitimate and that our time schedule is filled because of the necessary things we must do, we must admit to ourselves that the time we spend in day-dreaming, or in thoughts which do not lead upward, would add up to a startling total if it were calculated accurately.

Here then is one important place where we can conserve our time. For when all is said and done, the character that is perfectly developed is the one that has had its training during the rush and the stress of daily activities.

Precious are the moments! Wise and happy are they who make the most of them.

"Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of; in nothing on which you might not pray for the blessing of God; in nothing which you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed; in nothing which you might not safely and properly be found doing if death should surprise you in the act."

THE Eternal Creator, the God of our salvation, has been and still is merciful to the children of men, more merciful than their conduct deserves. Had He rewarded humanity according to their works, we should have been cut off long ago.

But He will not always chide; He will not withhold His judgments forever. The day is coming when He will not keep silence; when He will call to account His servants, and reckon with the nations of earth.

The hour of decision is near!

No matter how we study the Word of God, or with what purpose we read it, we must conclude that the paramount theme of its message is the Judgment at the last day.

No matter how severely men may denounce the Word of God as unreliable or uninspired, its fulfilled and fulfilling prophecies testify to its genuineness, and thereby strengthen its predictions that the day of God's reckoning with men is near.

No matter how scholars may calculate the chronology from Adam down to the present, they inevitably reach the same conclusion that the six thousand years allotted man for his probation are about to expire.

And no matter how men may scoff and ridicule and try to contradict the Scriptural teaching of the coming Day of Judgment, that day will come, nevertheless. As said the Apostle Peter, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night."

Humanity cannot withstand the inevitable. God has promised; He will fulfill. He has given His word; He will not fail.

With God, time is meaningless, since He has an eternity before Him. But He will not allow evil to flourish

The hours are viewless angels,
That still go gliding by,
And bear each minute's record up
To Him who sits on high;
And we who walk among them,
As one by one departs,
See not that they are hovering
Forever round our hearts.

Like summer bees that hover
Around the idle flowers,
They gather every act and thought,
Those viewless angel-hours;
The poison or the nectar
The heart's deep flower cups yield,
A sample still they gather swift,
And leave us in the field.

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XI